wherein:

A represents sulfur or selenium;

Z represents a combination of a substituted or unsubstituted non-cyclic spacer which separates A from the carbonyl carbon of the amido group by 1 to 10 atoms, said atoms being independently selected from carbon, oxygen, sulfur, nitrogen and phosphorous, and a substituted or unsubstituted mono- or fused or nonfused poly-heterocyclic radical, wherein said non-cyclic spacer separates A from one of said heterocyclic radicals by 1 to 10 atoms;

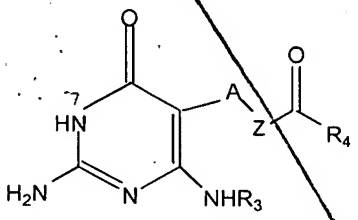
$R_3$ represents H or a straight, branched or cyclic ($C_1$ to $C_6$) alkyl group, optionally carrying one or more hydroxyl or amine groups; and

$R_4$ represents hydroxy, ($C_1$ to $C_6$) alkyloxy group optionally carrying one or more hydroxyl or amine groups, or a protected or unprotected amino acid linked to the acyl group of formula V by the amine portion of the amino acid;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

Please cancel Claim 53.

54. (AMENDED) A process for preparing a compound having the formula V




V

wherein:

A represents sulfur or selenium;

Z represents a combination of a substituted or unsubstituted non-cyclic spacer

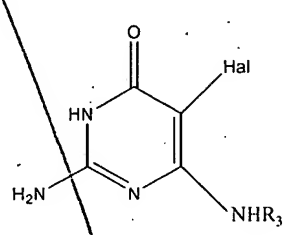
which separates A from the carbonyl carbon of the amido group by 1 to 10 atoms, said atoms being independently selected from carbon, oxygen, sulfur, nitrogen and phosphorous, and a substituted or unsubstituted mono- or fused or nonfused poly-heterocyclic radical, wherein said non-cyclic spacer separates A from one of said heterocyclic radicals by 1 to 10 atoms;

$R_3$ represents H or a straight, branched or cyclic ($C_1$ to $C_6$) alkyl group, optionally carrying one or more hydroxyl or amine groups; and

$R_4$ represents hydroxy, ($C_1$ to $C_6$) alkyloxy group optionally carrying one or more hydroxyl or amine groups, or a protected or unprotected amino acid linked to the acyl group of formula V by the amine portion of the amino acid;

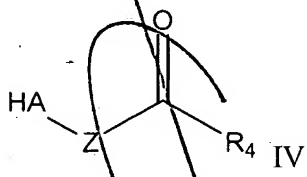
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof;

which process comprises reacting a compound having the formula VI



VI

wherein Hal is bromine, chlorine, iodine, or fluorine, and $R_3$ is as defined above, with a compound having the formula IV



IV

wherein A, Z, and $R_4$ are as defined above, in the presence of a nonnucleophilic auxiliary base in a solvent in which at least one of said reactants is at least partially soluble under conditions sufficient to obtain the compound of formula V.

58. (AMENDED) A process according to claim 54 wherein A represents sulfur and Z represents $-(CH_2)_n$ -X-Ar- wherein

n is an integer from 0 to 5,

X represents a methylene, monocyclic heterocyclic ring, sulfur, oxygen or amino radical, optionally carrying one or more substituents independently selected from $C_1$ to $C_6$ alkyl or $C_2$ to $C_6$ alkenyl groups, $C_1$ to $C_6$ alkoxy or $C_1$ to $C_6$ alkoxy($C_1$ to $C_6$) alkyl groups, $C_2$ to $C_6$ alkynyl groups, acyl groups, halogen, amino groups, hydroxyl groups, nitro groups or mercapto groups, monocyclic carbo- or heterocyclic rings, and fused or non-fused poly-carbocyclic or poly-heterocyclic rings; and

B4

Ar represents a monocyclic heterocyclic aromatic ring or a bicyclic heterocyclic ring, all or a portion of which may be aromatic, and wherein the Ar may be fused to the monocyclic heterocyclic ring of X, and wherein the Ar optionally carries one or more substituents independently selected from $C_1$ to $C_6$ alkyl or $C_2$ to $C_6$ alkenyl groups, $C_1$ to $C_6$ alkoxy or $C_1$ to $C_6$ alkoxy($C_1$ to $C_6$)alkyl groups, $C_2$ to $C_6$ alkynyl groups, acyl groups, halogen, amino groups, hydroxyl groups, nitro groups or mercapto groups, monocyclic carbo- or heterocyclic rings, and fused or non-fused poly-carbocyclic or poly-heterocyclic rings.